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REMARKS

Claims 1-13 and 15-18 remain in the application with independent claims 1 and 13 amended to emphasize that the claimed electrodes are functional with conducting medium as a coil for detecting magnetic resonance signals from tissue in the region of interest for use in imaging the tissue, and further distinguish the cited prior art.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested for claims 1-13 and 15-18 as amended.

As previously noted, a detector as claimed can be placed under the patella (knee cap) for imaging a defect in the patellar cartilage. As previously noted, such a coil arrangement provides increased signal to noise when compared to use of a surface coil, for example.

The Examiner again cites prior art previously cited in the Office Action mailed July 21, 2006, and the cited prior art is believed to be distinguished in the Response dated September 26, 2006, which is incorporated herein by reference. The cited McKinnon 5,792,055 patent discloses an open wire length antenna which is used in a MRI system for obtaining an image of the antenna and thus for calculating the position of a medical appliance in a body associated with the antenna. While the open wire length antenna can comprise two conductors, such as a twisted pair (Fig.4) or two parallel strands (Fig. 5), McKinnon notes that the open ended antenna includes an open-ended piece of wire, as opposed to a closed wire length such as a piece of wire with a coil configuration (Col.4, lines 58-61). This to be contrasted with the claimed invention including two electrodes which do function as a coil configuration.

The cited Glowinski 5,868,674 patent discloses a coil for generating an additional magnetic field within a body to be imaged for adjusting contrast in imaging. The Glowinski coil does not detect MRI signals as does the claimed invention; a conventional external coil 8 detects MR signals.

The cited Nowinski et al 6,701,173 patent merely shows retractable electrodes that extend from a catheter and can be used as a target for identifying a position within a body for surgical procedures, and thus is similar in function to the McKinnon open wire length antenna in identifying a position in a body but not for detecting MRI signals from tissue for use in imaging the tissue.

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 15-17 have again been rejected under 35 U.S.C.103(a) as being unpatentable over McKinnon in view of Glowinski. The Examiner notes that McKinnon does not disclose electrodes functional as a coil for detecting MR signals, the Examiner now referring to Glowinski detector coil 8, which is a conventional external coil for detecting MR signals.

This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons given in the Response mailed September 26, 2006. Further, it is noted that the conventional detecting coil 8 of Glowinski is external to the region of interest. The McKinnon open wire length antenna is inserted in a region of interest, for establishing the position of the antenna, but as recognized by the Examiner does not function as a coil for detecting MR signals. The functions of the two structures are different as are the positions and configurations of the Glowinski coil and the McKinnon open wire length antenna. It is respectfully submitted that McKinnon could not be reconstructed in view of the Glowinski coil without defeating the function of the McKinnon open length wire in locating positions within a region of interest, and in any event would not suggest the two electrode probe as defined by the claims.

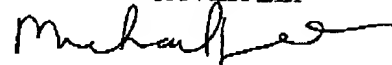
Claims 8, 11, and 18 are again rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over McKinnon in view of Glowinski and further in view of Nowinski et al, the Examiner referring to Nowinski as teaching retractable electrodes, albeit not for a MR system.

This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons given in the Response mailed September 26, 2006. The electrodes in Nowinski are for positioning purposes in stereotactic surgery, similar to the position locating open wire length antenna of McKinnon. Neither device is designed as a coil for detecting MR signals from tissue in a region of interest for use in imaging the tissue, as is the claimed probe. Any attempted reconstruction of the McKinnon antenna using the teachings of Glowinski and Nowinski would not result in or suggest the probe as defined by claim 8 or the method of claims 11 and 18 using the probe of claim 8.

Since claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 15-17 as amended are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over McKinnon in view of Glowinski et al, and since claims 8, 11, and 18 as amended are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over McKinnon in view of Glowinski et al and further in view of Nowinski et al, all as above set forth, it is requested that claims 1-13 and 15-18 as amended be allowed and the application be advanced to issue.

Should the Examiner have any questions or suggestions regarding this amendment and response, a telephone call to the undersigned attorney is requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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STFUP076/S00-131

Page 5

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